



Solicitation Information

February 22, 2016

Addendum #3

RFP #7550229

TITLE: Textile Composition and Condition Analyses and Treatment Proposal Services for the Rhode Island State Battle Flag Collection

SUBMISSION DEADLINE: February 29, 2016 at 11:00 AM (EST)

Attached are the following documents:

- 1. Complete list of questions and answers from the Pre-Proposal Conference held on February 12, 2016.**
- 2. Vendor questions received via e-mail with State responses.**

No further questions will be answered.

**GAIL WALSH
CHIEF BUYER**

**Pre-Bid Conference for RFP #7550229:
Textile Composition and Condition Analyses and Treatment Proposal Services for the Rhode Island
State Battle Flag Collection**

Friday, February 12, 2016

Questions & Responses

1. What is the difference between the draft reports versus the final, hard-copy report? What are you looking for in the draft report that wouldn't be in the final report?

Answer: The draft is a way for the Department to check in with conservator's progress and to provide some sense of what the final report will look like. The Draft report will be a 'first draft' of a final report, and we do not expect significant changes between versions.

2. Is the goal to remove all flags at once?

Answer: No. While removing them all at once would be ideal, it is not feasible because of the impact it would have on normal business operations. The idea is that a single case will be opened and the flags removed, and that it will be a six-phase de-installation process. This is subject to the opening of the first case and assessment of the conditions in that initial case.

All de-installation will occur outside of normal business operations at the State House, which are Monday-Friday, 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

3. Is there a space in the Capitol where flags could be securely stored if necessary?

Answer: No. From a logistical prospective, there is not a space that would accommodate the size of the flags. The service elevator is not a true freight elevator and cannot accommodate oversized objects. The Department envisions that the flags will be removed from the cases, packed in transport containers and immediately placed on a truck to be taken to the conservation facility. The Department will entertain alternate ideas, but there is no storage space in the Capitol building or any state facility that would meet the needs of the collection.

4. Could you explain to what degree the aforementioned other parties will contribute to the effort of opening of the cases, and to what degree that responsibility falls on the conservator?

Answer: The Department does not have any expectations that the conservator will be responsible for any of the construction management related work required as part of this project. The frames are roughly 20 feet tall and 6-10 feet wide. The goal is to obtain the services of a general services contractor with experience working in the State House who will oversee and project manage that component of the project. The Conservator will interact with this Contractor in order to ensure that the case frames are removed in a manner that is suitable to the de-installation of the flags.

5. For the purposes of the long-term storage of the flag collection, it would be acceptable to propose a site in Massachusetts?

Answer: Yes. The Department does not expect that storage will be in Rhode Island.

6. Is there an expectation that the State would want the flags closer to Rhode Island versus farther away for long-term storage?

Answer: Ideally, the long-term storage facility would be closer to the Capitol or Providence more specifically. The Department did research available facilities in Rhode Island and did discover that there are currently none that meet the storage needs of this collection. The Department is aware of a couple larger facilities in and around the Boston area, but will not stipulate where the collection is stored. That being said, if the collection were in Minnesota, for example, that could present a challenge.

7. While the flags are in storage, it is assumed that someone from the State would want to be able to have access to them?

Answer: The State does want access, but in terms of actually periodically monitoring the collection, the State is asking that the Conservator account for these services in their proposal. The goal is to have a suitable state facility within 5 years, but this project has built in a contingency. Currently, there is no active plan in progress to create a storage facility.

8. Would the State be able to provide information about its collections management software so that records will be compatible?

Answer: The State currently uses Microsoft Excel to inventory its collections.

9. Are the flags in the cases accessioned and have reference numbers?

Answer: No.

10. You would then want enough information in the record so that a reference number could be assigned?

Answer: Yes. The State does expect a tag on each flag, but is looking for the conservator to collect and document sufficient metadata so that the information could be entered into a database at a later date.

11. Have you considered what method of re-installation you might use? For example, when conserving the poles and making recommendations for future conservation of the flags, do we have to anticipate that you might want to put the flags back on the poles?

Answer: The Working Group is still working through this decision, but suspects that the report may indicate that continued hanging storage is not best practice. The State of Connecticut did return the flags on their staffs to the original display cases. The State is in an active conversation about what the long-term display will look like. From a proposal perspective, we

recommend that this option is included in the proposal, but that the consequences associated with this decision be fully enumerated in the report. It may be that some are displayed on their staffs, but no decision has been made.

12. I gather that it will be an open dialogue with the chosen contractor, that we will help you make some of these more difficult decisions?

Answer: The State is going out to bid to actively seek the expertise, and will be looking to the Conservator to bring in advice, make recommendations, and maintain an open dialogue with the Vendor. There is room for some flexibility with how the ultimate goal is achieved. The State does not have the in-house expertise to address the specific needs of this collection.

13. Will the State insure the collection itself?

Answer: The State currently insures the collection at a minimal amount, and will insure the collection both in transit and wherever they are ultimately stored. The State will insure them throughout the process at its own expense.

14. Would you please make both of the reports mentioned in the RFP available?

Answer: These will be posted as addenda to the RFP as soon as possible. **(This has been addressed and posted as a separate addendum)**

15. In the list of things that the Commission has already acquired, there is reference to a hung display panel—what is that?

Answer: The display panel is an optional repurpose of a box top from the custom sized boxes yet to be constructed. The intent was that a top could be covered/padded and used as a slant board with magnets or pins if needed.

16. Do the flags have to come off their staffs for transportation?

Answer: Let me circle back with the textile folks in the working group, but for the state's purposes, we would likely defer to the recommendations from a conservator. We will get clarification on that.

17. Could you also confirm that all the flags fit in the boxes?

Answer: Yes. The Commission did not purchase 78 transport containers. This is another reasons we did not anticipate all 78 flags going at once. 14 or 15 cases were purchased, which would support de-installation and transport of one flag case at a time.

18. These cases are expected to be used for transport and not storage?

Answer: The initial idea was that the storage containers would be used to store the flags from the first, pilot case and go to a state facility until the powder-coated cases had been procured. The powder-coated permanent storage cases have not been procured yet.

19. How wide are the doors at the Capitol?

Answer: The good news is that the 'ceremonial' entrance doors open really widely, but the elevator will not accommodate the flags. The doors are in excess of 6 feet wide, and very tall.

20. Are holidays an option?

Answer: We could work around that, yes.

21. When the Legislature is in session, they are not here on Mondays and Fridays, either?

Answer: Sometimes toward the end of session, the Legislature will be in on a Monday or Friday, but as a rule, they are not in session Monday or Friday. But, the building is open between 8:30-4:30 five days per week year round.

22. Could you clarify something about the powder-coated steel cases—they would need to be purchased in time to go to the long-term storage facility? For the five year storage plan, would a rolled-storage solution be appropriate?

Answer: I do not believe the powder-coated cases will be procured in advance of this phase of the project. The State will entertain both rolled storage and flat storage solutions. We want to avoid using the wrong materials just to get them flat, and some of the feedback gathered indicates the flags may not be suitable for flat storage immediately given their current condition.

23. So, the real basic is to just assess their current condition and not to do anything beyond vacuuming?

Answer: Yes. That would be the only active conservation in this phase of the project. We do expect recommendations for treatment, but the only active conservation/treatment for this phase of the project would be vacuuming.

24. What about humidification?

Answer: This should be included in your proposal if it is part of your standard practice, but perhaps included as a contingency as this likely will not be known to be necessary until the first case has been opened.

25. In terms of working with the contractor who will be opening the cases, you also mentioned rehabilitation of the cases—I'm hoping that they are on a different timeframe and that work does not also have to be finished by December 2016?

Answer: No. The primary goal that must be completed is the conditions assessment. The Working Group still does not know what the final rehabbed version of the cases will be. The Conservator's work will drive the Contractor's schedule.

26. Does that contract include putting the glass and frames back without anything in them, or a banner?

Answer: Yes. The proposal includes a high-quality photo and re-print to be applied over the glass. While we do not anticipate that cases will sit open for any extended period of time, I cannot guarantee the cases will not be left open, but if they are left open, they will be empty.

27. The high-resolution-large scale printing component? How large of a print to do want?

Answer: Photos should accommodate printing at a size up to 4 feet x 6 feet at a minimum of 150 dpi. For purposes of this proposal, pricing for both 150 dpi and 300 dpi reproductions should be considered.

28. It is anticipated that we would know who the professional photographer would be at the time of bidding?

Answer: In most other RFPs, all subcontractors are named when the proposals are submitted.

29. There is maybe a typo in the proposal, on page 6, paragraph b—is states phases 3-6 are part of this contract, and phase 7 is part of the long-term storage.

Answer: We will amend the RFP to make this correction. **(This has been addressed and posted as a separate addendum)**

30. Can we take pictures?

Answer: Sure. And the reports that will be posted do have a pretty thorough photo documentation of the collection, as well.

31. We can stay after the pre-bid to look at the collection?

Answer: Yes, I will officially close the pre-bid, which means any questions asked after will be off the record after that point.

32. A truck can drive up to the plaza?

Answer: Yes. As you can see, you do have clearance issues—the largest truck we have been able to back up to the portico is a 15 foot box truck. We would anticipate that your egress would be through the North entrance.

33. One of my questions is about room to work, as we've been asked to photograph the flags 'in situ'—what is the available work space?

Answer: I think this is something we can be a little flexible with given constraints of the workspace. This is really your work area, and we do not anticipate being able to re-configure this space. We may be able to set something up temporarily in the Bell Area that would at least allow you to pack them. Whatever is set up, has to be taken down each day.

34. Where are the other cases?

Answer: Sure, if we're all ready to move to the other area...

35. Is there any discussion about moving the Bell?

Answer: Yes, that can be moved. The Contractor hired for case work will be responsible for arranging that, not the Conservator.

36. Is there a name for this atrium, or this side of the building?

Answer: This is usually referred to as the Bell Room, this is the South foyer.

37. You mentioned steam coming out of those vents—is there any air at all that comes out of those vents?

Answer: No, there is no air conditioning in this space.

38. Do you have any plans for additional interpretation or exhibit changes?

Answer: We don't expect that this proposal would include any long term exhibit. There is an interest in telling the story of the conservation process. The Working Group has kicked around several ideas—are there a half dozen or so that could be displayed on a rotating display—we don't know? The other question is do flags from current conflicts go in these cases? The original legislation was intended to display flags for living veterans. There have also been discussions of having reproductions made, but we have learned that this may not be best practice. We have not made an official decision—the assessment is meant to inform these decisions.

39. Each of these cases that are on the sides are arced toward the back, however there are two smaller rectangular cases in the North Foyer?

Answer: Those cases were added and cut into the walls later. These 4 concave cases did not have frames when the state house opened, they were alcoves. There were existing recesses that were made deeper for the rectangular cases.

40. You were talking earlier about pine cases—where were they intended to go?

Answer: To be determined. Somewhere in the State House, but no specific location had been determined. The very original plan was to put the flags into long-term storage in the State House, but, after analysis by Project Managers, we determined that we would need a minimum of 1,000 square feet, which is not available in this building. There is cavernous space in the sub-basement, but it is not accessible, climate-controlled, or secure, and the buildout was determined to be cost prohibitive.

41. Is there a possibility of the collection going to a historical society?

Answer: We haven't had any discussions about transfer of custody, or a long-term loan. We do know that there is a universal shortage of space among historical organizations in Rhode Island. Even Rhode Island Historical Society, which is our largest collecting institution, could not accommodate the collection. Even RISD has a space shortage. There have been broader conversations about a new State Archives, which houses our paper records, and there is a

motivation to create a suitable space that could also accommodate these more specialized collections. We are actively trying to identify space, and the goal is not to keep the flags in off-site storage. We do expect this to be a phased process.

42. Is there a cutoff of when no additional updates will be put up?

Answer: If questions are submitted Wednesday, we will work very hard to post responses by Friday. Any addendum posted after responses would be to extend the submission deadline.

43. Would you include a floor plan with square footage for the North & South foyers of the State House as an addendum?

Answer: Yes. **(This has been addressed and posted as a separate addendum)**

E-Mailed Questions for RI flags RFQ_7550229:

Vendor A

- I counted 81 flags and 79 staffs during the site visit on Feb 12th, but the bid states there are 78 flags. Please clarify.

The Proposal should include services for the (2) flags that do not have staffs in addition to the 79 flags hanging on staffs. The original number (78) was derived from our written inventory records, but the proposal should account for all flags as counted during the walkthrough.

- Who will be responsible for the bugle once the case is opened? Will it need packing as part of the proposal?

The State Collections Manager and/or Rhode Island State Archives will assume custody of the bugle once the case is opened. Packing the item should be included as part of your proposal, however.

- Can the flag examination tables listed on page 8 be disassembled?

The flag table was designed with leaves that fold down so it could go through a doorway.

- Beyond not working between 8:30 – 4:30 on Monday through Friday and avoiding the weekdays while the Legislature is in session are there any other restrictions on working in the Capitol? For example, could one work from 8 am to 10 pm on a Saturday?

With adequate advance notice of your anticipated schedule, we could accommodate a weekend work schedule such as the one listed in the question. We do need advance notice to ensure that Facilities staff and Capitol Police are on site.

- To clarify the term 'bi-monthly' in terms of the monitoring of the collection while in storage – 'bi-monthly' refers to 6 times per year versus twice a month?

Bi-Monthly does refer to 6 times per year, or every other month.

Vendor B

- 1) Is the total number of items in this collection known, including flags, cords, ribbons, halyards, plaques, and poles?

No—there is no written record that gives an item count. Any counts we have been derived from a visual inspection of the flags as they are currently displayed in the cases.

- 2) Is the method by which the flags are attached to the poles known?

There is no documentation that describes the method by which the flags are attached to the poles.

- 3) Can the supplies provided by the State be returned to the State House at the time the flags go into long-term storage, or should the costs for storing these items be included in the long-term storage quote?

The State will take possession of the supplies once the flags are placed in long-term storage, so you do not need to include costs for storing these items in your quote for long-term storage.

- 4) Do any specific qualifications need to be provided for the art transportation and storage company staff?

The art transportation company should be properly bonded and insured and have prior experience in transporting collections of a similar type. We would ask for a list of prior experience from the art transportation company to be included in this proposal, as we have requested for all sub-contractors.

- 5) I do not see the two reports by Alex Allardt online anywhere. We were told they would be supplied to us in PDF. Is this still possible? I apologize if any of my questions would have been answered by these reports.

These reports have been posted on the Purchasing website as of February 18, 2016.